

THEIR VOICE

ANIMAL EQUALITY'S MAGAZINE
N° 10 - WINTER 2020

FREE

JOAQUIN PHOENIX

USING HIS VOICE TO HELP OTHERS

GOING ONLINE DURING
LOCKDOWN

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to the changing world*

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Happy holidays to you all! I hope this message finds you safe and peaceful despite what has been a very challenging year. And though there has been much difficulty, there has also been reason to hope.

We have all seen or read stories of inspiring animal resilience. When I hear these tales of perseverance, my heart is warmed knowing there is still so much good in this world. I want to share one such story with you.

After being in a cage for over six months, Olivia had very few feathers left on her body. She had a severe beak deformity due to it being cut when she was still a baby chick—a fate billions of hens before her had suffered. To stop hens like Olivia from pecking on other hens due to the extreme confinement and stress of living on a factory farm, these birds' beaks are sliced off with a burning razor blade.

This mutilation made it difficult for Olivia to eat. She could only consume about half the amount of food as most of the other hens, which made her fragile and her body weak. But she was not fragile or weak in spirit.

I saw Olivia as soon as I arrived at the factory farm, finding her immediately with my torch as I scanned the cages for weak or sick hens. The moment I found her I knew I would rescue her.

She was frightened and shivering as I softly drew her out of the cage. But after a moment, she slowly nestled into my arms, sensing that she was now safe. Immediately after, I took her to a vet, who proclaimed, "she is a survivor". Hours later, she took her first steps on soft grass and felt the sun for the first time.

Resilience is defined by the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties or adversity. And of that, animals can teach us a lot. Beaten to death when they are sick or injured; locked in small cages; slaughtered while still conscious. It is difficult to imagine a life worse than those raised and killed for food. However, anyone who has rescued or worked with animals will tell you stories of resilience, such as Olivia's.

As we face incredible challenges as a society, I find that focusing on animals, especially on their individual stories, gives me hope.

But it's people like you who also give animals hope—a hope for a better tomorrow, where we are all respected and protected, regardless of our species.

Over the last six months, we have told and changed the stories of countless animals. And thanks to your continued support, our team has impacted the lives of millions of animals in 2020, with our investigations, corporate outreach, legal advocacy, and innovative programs creating a better world for farmed animals every day.

As the year comes to a close, I reflect on all we have accomplished together this year and know that the hope for a better tomorrow is on the horizon—for animals and people, alike.

Thank you.

Sharon Núñez

Sharon Núñez
President
Animal Equality



Friends,

2020 has been a year defined by change.

Our reality has been radically transformed – today's world would have been unrecognisable just months ago. In some way or another we have all been impacted by this crisis and my heart goes out to each and every one of you.

As I reflect on the many ways in which our global community continues to confront new challenges, I recognise that life for farmed animals remains much the same – their existence permanently dominated by sadness, struggle and severe suffering. And with reduced on-site inspections during lockdown, farmed animals need us now more than ever before.

The sheer scale of the issues faced by animals is enormous, but our relentless quest for justice is far, far greater. Thanks to the incredible work of Animal Equality's brave investigators, devoted colleagues

and loyal supporters, we've been able to bring about huge changes for animals over the years. Because of us – because of YOU – foie gras in India is banned; farmed animals in Jalisco, Mexico have legal protections; and animal abusers in Britain have been jailed. The list goes on!

This year might be centred around change, but one thing I know will forever remain constant is our unwavering drive to defend animals from harm. Animal Equality's dedicated team will never stop fighting for better, fighting for what is right and fighting to create change for animals.

These past six months have been as busy as ever for us. In the UK we:

- Revealed secret footage of hens crammed into extremely overcrowded cages in an English egg farm, afforded less space than an A4 piece of paper each;
- Released a two-part exposé into the systemic suffering taking place within 12 chicken farms operated by Moy Park, one of the UK's biggest chicken producers;
- Convinced major companies to eliminate some of the worst abuses in their supply chains – including Nando's and Pizza Express;
- Provided bespoke webinars to a number of leading corporations, including PwC, Aviva and the Bank of England, highlighting the links between animal agriculture and environmental degradation;
- Lobbied the Government to ban the importation of animal products linked to deforestation;

and more!

I dream of the day when all cows and calves can cuddle together, all mother hens are left to lovingly raise their babies and all fish swim free. And, knowing what Animal Equality has already achieved, I look to the future with hope.

Keep well and keep safe my friends,
Abi

Abigail Penny
Executive Director
Animal Equality UK

BABY CHICKS CRUELLY CAGED ON BRITISH FARM

In October 2020, Animal Equality UK released a powerful investigation into a ‘quality assured’ British egg farm, known to supply UK wholesalers and local retailers. Kinswood Eggs confines around 320,000 hens each year and sells a staggering 72 million eggs annually.

Within the nine gigantic sheds on-site – some containing over 30,000 birds in a single shed – Animal Equality’s brave investigators discovered extreme animal suffering. We found hens crammed into overcrowded cages, with as many as 100 birds in a single cage, each receiving less than an A4 space of paper. Tragically, many birds had lost their feathers from the stress of it all. We also discovered decaying carcasses left to rot in cages with living birds, as well as mice running around throughout the facility.

Our findings received widespread coverage, including an exclusive in the [Daily Mail](#) and a release in the [Independent](#). Our campaign was endorsed by TV businesswoman, [Deborah Meaden](#), and it even trended on [Reddit’s](#) ‘World News’ thread!

Professor Andrew Knight, Veterinary Professor of Animal Welfare and Ethics, reviewed Animal Equality’s findings and expressed concern: “Some of these birds were so tightly packed they would have had difficulty performing highly motivated natural behaviours, such as wing-stretching and wing-flapping, causing stress and poor welfare.”

He further noted: “Also visible were a chick trapped within the wire of a cage and several dead chickens within cages... predisposing to disease and likely increasing the rodent infestation common within such farms.”

Kinswood Eggs forces hens into cages from a very young age in order to closely control all aspects of the chicks’ lives to minimise costs and maximise egg size. In an interview in 2016, the producer admitted to this process, claiming that by strictly controlling the animals’ experience “from housing to heating, hydration to ventilation” they can “produce the biggest eggs possible.” Such extremely abnormal conditions are a far cry from a hen’s natural habitat and can have severe physical and psychological effects for the birds.

Upon reviewing the footage, Abigail Penny, Executive Director of Animal Equality UK, said: “Just days after birth, these fragile chicks are packed into wire cages and locked away for life. Companies like to paint a picture of happy hens lovingly laying eggs for us to eat, yet they fail to add that around 40% of UK hens are kept in cages.”

She added: “The conditions that we filmed in this ‘quality assured’ British egg farm are, quite frankly, revolting. If you saw rodent poison and decomposing carcasses in a local restaurant there’s no way you would ever eat there again.”

According to Defra’s most recent figures, over 38 million hens are used for eggs in the UK each year, with approximately 35-42% of those hens confined in cages. Many supermarket products, such as biscuits and fresh pasta, are often made with eggs from caged hens.

That’s why Animal Equality has launched a campaign to urge the Government to ban cruel cages for hens, now and forever. While cage-free does not mean cruelty-free, it will make the world of difference to the 16 million hens currently trapped in this cruel system each year.

Add your name to our petition today by visiting: animalequality.org.uk/act/help-hens



GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: DUE DILIGENCE ON FOREST RISK COMMODITIES

Animal agriculture is a leading driver of deforestation. Rainforests – ‘the lungs of the planet’ – play a key role in keeping the climate stable and releasing the oxygen we all need to survive.



Despite this, we destroy huge swathes every year for farming animals and for growing crops for animal feed. The majority of soy grown globally is actually used to feed farmed animals including pigs, chickens and fish raised for human consumption. Every single minute, an area of tropical rainforest the size of 10 football pitches is lost.

Deforestation destroys important habitats, causing mass species extinction and threatening the homes of Indigenous Peoples. It also contributes heavily to greenhouse gas emissions as carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere when rainforests are cleared, intensifying climate breakdown.

In October 2020, Animal Equality submitted an official response to the UK Government’s consultation on a proposed new law designed to prevent forests and other important natural areas worldwide from being illegally

converted into agricultural land. This new law would be a good first step, but it doesn’t go far enough.

Alongside our colleagues in Animal Equality Brazil – who [investigated the impact of animal agriculture on the Amazon rainforest](#) in 2019 – we are urging the Government to put in place strategies to reduce the consumption of animal products and support the growth of the plant-based food sector.

We’re also calling for improved labelling on animal products linked to deforestation, greater supply chain transparency, and stronger enforcement of laws related to agricultural deforestation.

The entire system needs to be rebuilt to better protect animals, humans and the environment.





CHICKENS DEPRIVED OF WATER ON FARMS OPERATED BY KNOWN MCDONALD'S SUPPLIER

In August 2020, Animal Equality UK released footage captured by our brave undercover investigator into eight farms operated by Moy Park, one of Europe's largest chicken producers and responsible for raising and slaughtering over 312 million birds every year. All eight farms are Red Tractor-approved.



In an exclusive with [The Independent](#), we exposed severe animal suffering and extremely problematic, yet typical, industry practices. In one farm we discovered that smaller birds – deemed unprofitable by the industry – were deliberately deprived of water as water drinkers are routinely raised to such great heights that smaller birds are unable to reach. We also found many chickens suffering from raw skin burns and blisters on their feet and chests from filthy, urine-soaked floors, and hundreds of chickens being ruthlessly killed by workers each day on-site.

Moy Park supplies many major retailers, including fast-food chain McDonald's. That's why, alongside this public release, our Corporate Campaigns Department launched a powerful international Tweetstorm which saw over 25,000 tweets! We used this opportunity to highlight our important ['McChicken Cruelty'](#)



campaign and to urge the corporate giant to eliminate some of the worst abuses of chickens in its supply chain by signing up to the Better Chicken Commitment.

We gained substantial media coverage for this important story, including a television interview with BBC Look North, as well as online articles in BBC News, Coventry Live, Lincolnshire Live and Plant-Based News.

Sign our petition at mcchickencruelty.co.uk and [speak up for chickens today!](#)



HUNDREDS OF CHICKENS DIE IN A 24-HOUR PERIOD ON FARMS LINKED TO TESCO

In mid-August 2020, Animal Equality published a second investigative release into four separate farms, also operated by Moy Park. All four farms were found to be linked to major UK supermarket Tesco.

In our second exclusive release of the month with [The Independent](#), this far-reaching exposé highlighted the staggeringly high death rates found across multiple farms - on one occasion over 500 chickens were found to have died in a single shed over a 24 hour period. Many chickens were found to be dying due to problems prompted by their selective breeding, showing signs of lameness and difficulty breathing. Other chickens suffered critical injuries after being roughly 'tipped' onto farm floors on arrival. Workers were also consistently filmed culling birds, considering them too weak or too small to be profitable to the company.

During a secretly filmed conversation, one worker even stated: "I can look at a day-old chick and say that's going to make 1.85 [kg] at 32 days or it's not. If it isn't, there's no point feeding it. It's cheaper to kill it and get rid of it. Because at the end of the day it's about making money."

Many chickens were killed using the rough edges of farm feeders or by having their necks crushed or stretched; in one case a wellington boot was used and in several instances the birds appeared to remain conscious many minutes after their necks were broken. Animal Equality sought expert commentary from Professor Andrew Knight, Veterinary Professor of Animal Welfare at the University of Winchester, who publicly validated our claims of severe animal suffering.

This investigative series, across two releases and a total of 12 farms, garnered extensive media attention, with a combined potential reach of over 120 million people!

In parallel with this release, Animal Equality UK launched its ongoing [Tesco public awareness campaign](#), urging the major supermarket to eliminate some of these terrible abuses captured on camera and sign up to the Better Chicken Commitment. Our dedicated team of 'Animal Protector' online activists swiftly took action, sending over 2,000 emails to the company's senior executives and encouraging them to put in place meaningful changes for chickens currently trapped in the system.

Visit animalequality.org.uk/act/tesco today and add your name to this important campaign!





FOIE GRAS-FREE GB

In July 2020, Animal Equality UK launched Phase Two of its campaign to ban the importation of foie gras made by force-feeding.

Foie gras is immensely cruel and controversial. Animal Equality's investigations over the years have shown the horrific practices involved in 'gavage' – the force-feeding process – where sensitive ducks and geese are brutally fattened up using a feeding tube that is forced down their throats. The animal's diseased liver is then sold and marketed as foie gras. Force-feeding animals is illegal in the UK – based on welfare grounds – yet imports of this 'speciality' product are not.

Phase One of our campaign saw a number of successes. Two YouGov polls, commissioned by Animal Equality in 2018 and 2019, found that 79% of British respondents are in support of a ban. We also garnered support from an army of celebrities, including Ricky Gervais, Joanna Lumley and Dev Patel, and over 170,000 Brits joined our call to demand an end to foie gras imports.

Our campaign continues to gain positive traction. Phase Two is focused towards urging key political figures, George Eustice MP and Lord Zac Goldsmith, to enact a ban by 31st December 2020. British comedian, [Alan Carr](#), backed our ask, stating that "foie gras is no laughing matter", whilst actor and animal advocate, Peter Egan, took part in a heartfelt online interview with our UK Executive Director, Abigail Penny, describing his personal experience visiting a foie gras facility.

In October 2020, Sir Mike Penning - Conservative MP - tabled an Early Day Motion in Parliament, drawing this crucial issue to the attention of policy-makers and urging them to enact a ban without delay.

A ban would spare 250,000 birds from severe suffering every year. Animal Equality's tireless efforts continue.



NEW CORPORATE COMMITMENTS

2020 has been a difficult year for the food industry. Some sectors, such as hotels and restaurants, have seen closures and staff redundancies. Others, particularly retailers, have experienced a surge in business, leading to overwhelming pressure on their supply chain. Despite these challenges, our corporate outreach work forges on and a number of important policies have been secured in recent months, impacting millions of chickens in the UK.



Pizza Express joined other leading pizza chains, Papa John's and Pizza Hut, by signing up to the Better Chicken Commitment in July following contact from Animal Equality and other animal protection organisations. Pressure is mounting on Domino's to follow suit.



By far the biggest company to commit to the Better Chicken Commitment to date, in terms of the number of chickens in their supply chain and their influence on the wider sector, is Nando's. In July, they revealed a range of sustainability measures that include reducing some of the worst abuses of chickens used for meat in its supply chain. Various UK animal protection organisations were in dialogue with Nando's, including Animal Equality, and this groundbreaking policy has already encouraged other companies to engage in meaningful discussions with us about their own business practices.



Animal Equality has also been reaching out to those at the back-end of the supply chain: producers. While our ask of them is different, it's no less valuable in bringing about vital change for chickens. By pledging to meet demand come the deadline of 2026, we can assure public-facing companies at the front end of the supply chain that they can confidently sign up to the full Better Chicken Commitment. In September, P. D. Hook (Hatcheries) Ltd., the fourth largest chicken producer in the UK, became the second UK producer to make such a pledge.

We continue to work with companies behind-the-scenes and are expecting even more commitments to be announced publicly before the end of the year. It's encouraging that some companies have used this unsettling and evolving time to reflect and act on their priorities, ensuring animal welfare is one of them. Whilst animal agriculture can never be cruelty-free, these important actions result in meaningful changes for those animals currently trapped in the system.



CURRENT CAMPAIGNS

Our dedicated online network of Animal Protectors are at the heart of our corporate campaigns. Their relentless efforts have raised awareness amongst the general public about the plight of hens used for eggs and chickens used for meat, and forced giant corporations to adopt meaningful animal welfare policies.

We currently have four BIG campaigns running, and we need your help! McDonald's, RBI (the parent company of fast-food chain Burger King), Subway and Tesco are all ignoring our calls to end some of the cruellest practices against the animals in their supply chains. By keeping hens in cages and using fast-growing chickens who can barely stand, let alone walk, these multi-million pound companies are responsible for immense animal suffering and are betraying their customers. The more people who take our quick, easy, online actions, the more animals we can impact. Join us today at animalprotectors.org.uk and you could become our 5,000th Animal Protector!





MATCHING

GIFT



CHALLENGE

This year has been a difficult year for people across the globe and our sympathies go out to you all.

It has also been a difficult and painful time for hundreds of millions of animals confined in factory farms around the UK, and billions globally, but our team has continued to work tirelessly to raise awareness of their suffering. For factory farmed animals, confinement, mutilations, and chronic overcrowding are relentless everyday realities. During the early months of the pandemic, rather than increasing welfare checks for farmed animals, Red Tractor - the accreditation body for 80% of British farms - stopped inspections altogether. Animals need our help now more than ever to put an end to cruel and inhumane factory farming.

Despite its challenges, 2020 has been a year in which our teams have made an extraordinary effort to bring to light the public health issues caused by intensive farming practices. This year all of us have had to experience first-hand one of the most feared consequences of animal exploitation: the COVID-19 pandemic. The risk of a pandemic was something that academics, scientists and experts have been warning about for years. Today, unfortunately, it has become a reality.

Eating animals poses grave risks to human health and planetary longevity; it also has devastating consequences for the animals involved. The stakes are higher than they've ever been before and this year we need you more than ever. On 16th November, we launched our most important fundraiser of the year for animals which runs until the end of the year. We have a generous supporter that will match donations that are made until 31st December, doubling the impact of your donations. This provides the opportunity to guarantee the continuity and growth of Animal Equality's life-saving programmes and investigations.

For example, if you donate £25, our generous anonymous donor will match your donation, turning it into £50. This happens automatically, at no extra cost to you!

And there's an opportunity to have an even greater impact! If you're in a position to sign-up to become a monthly donor your entire first 12 months of donations will be matched. So, for example, by signing up to give £10 per month your impact would be doubled to £20 a month for the first 12 months.

Right now, we need you more than ever. [Please help us double our efforts and donate before 31st December!](#)

IS COVID-19 THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR MCDONALD’S?

McDonald’s had to temporarily close earlier this year. Is this a sign of things to come for the fast food giant?

A bad thing

From the time the UK saw its first set of golden arches go up in 1974, our nation had never experienced a widespread closure of McDonald’s restaurants... until COVID-19 crossed our shores.

As of 7pm on 23rd March, each of the 1,270+ McDonald’s locations across the UK closed their doors, with no set date for their reopening. It was an unprecedented time.

For the first time in decades, people no longer had access to the American company’s signature burgers and chicken nuggets. But was this such a bad thing for customers? And how would it impact animals?

With growing concerns about food safety in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and estimates that three out of every four new or emerging infectious diseases in people come from animals, it’s about time that food companies ramped up their efforts to prevent the spread of such diseases.

It’s been proven that the immune systems of animals raised on lower welfare factory farms are far weaker than any other; couple this with the immense overcrowding seen on these intensive farms – where some 90 percent of farmed animals are raised – and the risk of contracting and spreading dangerous diseases is worryingly high.

For the sake of public health and the animals on these farms, companies must significantly improve current welfare standards and begin to transition towards a more plant-based food system.

McDonald’s contribution

That being said, how is McDonald’s contributing to this issue? In part due to their size, chickens are the land animals raised in the greatest numbers by far. Every single year, approximately 25 million chickens are bred and slaughtered for McDonald’s UK alone.

That’s nearly one chicken for every two Brits, before even factoring in the many other animals that suffer immensely in order to maximise the company’s profits.

But maybe these birds are raised to high welfare standards and meet a relatively painless end...? Sadly not. Despite key competitor KFC adopting a robust set of chicken welfare standards in July 2019, known as the Better Chicken Commitment, McDonald’s is still yet to follow suit.

Welfare issues

Among other issues, the company has failed to make a commitment to end the use of fast-growing chickens, meaning that the millions of birds in its supply chain grow so big, so fast, that their legs and organs are pushed to the absolute limit.

Some become unable to walk, while others die of heart attacks in just the first few weeks of their short lives. To make matters worse, these enormous birds are shockingly packed into sheds by the tens of thousands, each having as little space as an A4 piece of paper. Is it any wonder that viruses like bird flu, which has so far taken the lives of over half of the people infected with it, are still present in many countries?

You’d be forgiven for thinking that the miserable, pain-ridden lives of these animals couldn’t get any worse, but sadly that’s not the case. At just five weeks old, they will experience a distressing journey to the slaughterhouse, where they will face a terrifying end. Because of the current stunning methods permitted by companies like McDonald’s, there’s no guarantee that every bird will be rendered unconscious before having their throats slit and bodies dunked in scalding hot water. The thought alone is too much to bear.

Do the animal-loving people of the UK really want chickens to be raised in such a horrific way? No.

Do they want companies like McDonald’s to put the public’s health at risk by continuing these potentially dangerous practices? Absolutely not.

Meat alternatives

Could it be that McDonald’s has instead focused its efforts on reducing the sale of meat to tackle these issues? Unfortunately not.

While KFC has spared no time in introducing its first plant-based burger, and Burger King following suit with its veggie Rebel Whopper, McDonald’s has failed to satisfy the public’s growing appetite for good quality meat-alternatives. The company’s meagre offering of veggie dippers earlier this year certainly did not get its customers’ heart’s racing.

During this challenging period, we have a great opportunity to take stock of what’s going on in the food industry and re-evaluate which companies are acting in the best interests of people and animals. Likewise, companies like McDonald’s have the chance to re-strategise and start making meaningful changes that benefit society.

There has never been a better time for McDonald’s to step out of the dark ages of food production and into the modern day. 2020 is a dangerous time for food companies to ignore the growing demand for high animal welfare standards and delicious plant-based food. If these issues aren’t addressed soon, we could be looking at the beginning of the end for McDonald’s.



A version of this opinion piece, written by our Corporate Campaigns Coordinator, Andy Scott-Lewis, was published in Plant Based News in April 2020

ANIMAL PROTECTION DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND: WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

A version of this opinion piece, written by our Corporate Outreach Manager, Michelle Baxter Wickham, was published by Sentient Media in May 2020

Prior to March, one topic dominated every thought, discussion and news story: Brexit! In the animal protection movement, this meant one thing: how do we ensure the most fundamental principle underpinning our animal welfare standards - that animals are sentient and feel a range of emotions including pain through to joy - is enshrined into UK law when the transition period ends on 31st December 2020?

But then March hit, and Brexit slipped from the hot topic spot. It's no longer the main threat to the animals for whom we're responsible. The coronavirus pandemic has swept over our planet and, at the time of writing, resulted in over 32,000 human deaths. Supply chains are being radically remodelled to meet consumer demand, along with a drastically reduced workforce. Workers in Northern Ireland and the US, concerned that sanitisation and social distancing protocols aren't being taken seriously, have staged walkouts. In Canada and the US, after workers tested positive for COVID-19, companies have had to close. Avara, Moy Park and 2 Sisters Food Group, the UK's three largest poultry producers, put out a recruitment call for hundreds of staff to fill the workforce shortfall. The US has seen mass on-farm culling, where millions of animals have been killed onsite due to slaughterhouse closures, and there's increasing concern that it's only a matter of time before it comes to the UK. Red Tractor, the UK's go-to assurance scheme, has ceased in-person inspections, carrying out telephone and online assessments instead. Even at the best of times such inspections are relatively futile; Animal Equality's investigations have repeatedly demonstrated failings of Red Tractor and other similar schemes. Nonetheless, nothing can replace having eyes and ears on the ground.

None of this bodes well for intensively reared animals; in times like these, welfare standards inevitably drop down the priority list. Time and again, Animal Equality has exposed cruelty and poor practice on UK chicken, cow, hen and pig farms, and in slaughterhouses. The situation is likely to deteriorate even further when producers are struggling to produce in even shorter time-frames than usual, with insufficient staff. This is factory farming in 2020.

It underscores why initiatives to remove some of the cruellest practices from the supply chain are so important. They raise the basic protections for animals at a time of certainty, so that when uncertainty hits, we have legislation and policies in place to go some way in protecting them. There are numerous campaigns and programmes in the pipeline that need our support.

A 'Better Deal for Animals', supported by a coalition of 36 groups, will formally recognise animals as the living, feeling, breathing beings that they are. This shouldn't be in doubt given what we now know about animal emotion and behaviour.

Compassion in World Farming is leading the call to 'Stop Live Transport' of millions of animals who are exported for fattening or slaughter each year. In May, Animal Equality's team in Spain exposed terrified lambs being crammed together on trucks and transported for up to 10 days from Europe to the Middle East. The footage captured shows lambs getting caught in closing doors and gates, being roughly handled by workers, and stuck in long queues at the port in the

searing heat. They're denied sufficient food, water and rest. This is an unacceptable situation for the animals, and it increases the risk of disease spreading across the globe.

2018 saw the launch of a European Citizens' Initiative to 'End the Cage Age' for the billions of hens, pigs, rabbits and others who are caged. Having lived in lockdown for the past six weeks or more we can all relate to the frustrations and, in some cases, mental anguish at having our freedoms restricted. For the animals who endure physical restraint day in day out, there is no end in sight to their situation, until the day of slaughter of course. These animals retain the natural behaviours that they cannot express. Anyone who has been lucky enough to see a rescued hen escape their cage and experience grass, sunshine and dust baths for the first time, can attest to this. They instinctively know what to do.

Animal Equality is working alongside other organisations to encourage companies to adopt the 'Better Chicken Commitment', helping address some of the most serious welfare concerns in the supply chain. This work has the potential to impact more than one billion chickens each year in the UK alone and will see the end of fast-growing breeds who struggle to stand or walk, and severely overcrowded sheds where each bird has less space than an A4 piece of paper to themselves.

Animal Equality is also calling for a 'Foie Gras-Free GB' which, if successful, will spare the diseased livers of 250,000 force-fed ducks and geese from entering the UK each year. Most people find the

thought of this so-called delicacy repulsive, and agree that it has no place in a compassionate world.

If we're to be taken seriously as an animal loving nation with unrivalled welfare standards, then we need to step up our game. Right now, everyone's focus is quite correctly on coping with the next few days, weeks and months in the best way that we can. But history tells us that this won't be the last time we have to navigate our way through such a situation. Foot-and-mouth disease led to the culling of more than six million sheep, cattle and pigs in 2001; 8,000 people were infected with SARS coronavirus in 2003; and bird flu remains an ongoing concern for the poultry industry. In addition to the devastating loss of human and animal life, the global economy has also been severely damaged following each outbreak. The common thread is our abhorrent treatment of animals.

Our track record suggests that we never truly learn our lesson. So, this time, once we reach the calm after the storm, we need to combine our efforts - individuals, government and companies - to bring about the necessary changes to ensure that farmed animals are better protected. If we've learned anything over the past few months - where event spaces have transformed into hospitals, the racing car industry is producing vital medical equipment, and people have adapted to a new way of living - it's that when the will is there, we can find a way.

That's a powerful position to be in.

GOING ONLINE DURING LOCKDOWN

Earlier this year, Animal Equality hosted an online, animal-themed quiz-night to help raise vital funds to support our work for animals. During the month of June when the quiz was held, all donations made to Animal Equality were being matched by a very generous donor, so it was an especially valuable time for people to show their support.

Chris Smalling, animal advocate and professional footballer who has played for England, Manchester United and A.S. Roma, kindly gave his support by recording a heartfelt message to all who attended. The event raised valuable funds and it was a great opportunity for supporters to meet each other and test their animal-related knowledge.

With the COVID-19 pandemic limiting the time we can spend together in person, online events like this one have proven to be a valuable way to stay connected at a time when animals need us more than ever.

If you were unable to join us for the quiz, here are some of the questions to test your animal knowledge!

- 1. Which bird is a universal symbol of peace?**
☐ Seagull ☐ Sparrow ☐ Dove ☐ Robin
- 2. Approximately how many vocalisations can chickens make?**
☐ 20 ☐ 100 ☐ 50 ☐ 30
- 3. Which of these is the largest species of tuna?**
☐ Blackfin tuna ☐ Pacific bluefin tun ☐ Atlantic bluefin tuna ☐ Southern bluefin tuna
- 4. Which of these companies sold the most plant-based food in 2019 in the UK?**
☐ Quorn ☐ Linda McCartney ☐ Cauldron ☐ Fry's
- 5. What is the name of the pig protagonist in the famous story, Charlotte's Web?**
☐ Wilbur ☐ Jasper ☐ William ☐ Babe
- 6. Which continent has the highest biodiversity (number of animal and plant species)?**
☐ Asia ☐ South America ☐ Africa ☐ North America

1. Dove/2.30/3. Atlantic bluefin tuna/4. Quorn 5. Wilbur/6. South America



LUNCH AND LEARNS

In a time where we are dealing with urgent, unprecedented global challenges, such as COVID-19 and climate breakdown, we need to take action and work together more than ever before to create a more compassionate, sustainable future. That's why Animal Equality created a bespoke webinar for companies to highlight the undeniable links between animal agriculture, public health and environmental protection. Our science-led webinar discussed critical issues such as antibiotic resistance, zoonotic disease risk, deforestation, animal suffering and more.

With the UK Government pledging to bring carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 many large companies and organisations have started to think about how they can reduce their impact on the environment and how their staff members can also get involved. This new corporate landscape was further strengthened by a EAT-Lancet report. The report promotes the adoption of a primarily plant-based diet, indicating that this could have a significant impact on reducing human-induced climate change.

The free webinar has been successfully delivered to hundreds of staff members at a variety of large companies, including PwC, Aviva, the Bank of England and many others. All attendees received a free e-cookbook and a programme of recipes and tips via our loveveg.uk emails. The webinars were positively received, inspiring consumers to consider their individual impact and how they can contribute to a brighter future for all.

With many people working from home during lockdown, we also used this unique opportunity to raise awareness of the link between global public health and the consumption of animals.



RAISING A PLANT-POWERED BABY



Animal Equality relies on supporters, like you, to enable us to carry out our essential work for farmed animals. One such supporter is Nicola, Managing Director and mother to 18-month-old Audrey. Here she gives us some tips on raising a baby as sustainably as possible and tells us why Animal Equality is important to her.

Everyone has their own journey when it comes to becoming vegan, can you tell us about yours?

I'd been vegetarian all my life, and one day in Taunton I walked past a group of activists carrying out outreach. I learned about how animals are abused in the dairy, egg and clothing industries too, then there was no looking back - I instantly went vegan.

How did you come to raise your baby as carbon-neutral as possible and what does that entail?

My husband and I are passionate about the environment. We appreciate that everything we do on this planet has an impact; we consider all resources to be precious. Knowing this, we both hoped we'd be able to have a baby but also wanted to ensure that the impact was as minimal as possible.

I could (and hopefully will one day) write a book on trying to raise Audrey to be as carbon neutral as possible. It was hard work to implement a routine and to create ways to make things work, but we are used to it now. Here are some of the things involved:

- using reusable nappies (ideally bought second hand) and natural drying
- feeding our family on a vegan diet
- buying everything second hand (it can be awkward when we won't accept presents from people that want to give us things!)
- washing clothes only when they're actually dirty (people have a tendency to over wash baby clothes)
- no flying and very minimal car use
- sharing bath time to minimise water consumption

What have you found to be the toughest part of raising a baby as sustainably as possible?

Having to explain to people what we are doing, and telling enthusiastic grandparents that we will only accept things that are second hand. But, after showing them how easy this is, by using online sites like Oxfam online, Gumtree, Facebook marketplace, World of Books, as well as charity shops, they were happy. We still try to avoid having too much.

For any other would-be parents that are reading this, what tips would you give them for raising a baby on a plant-based diet?

Audrey is a fussy eater. Some days she'll only eat bananas, biscuits or plain pasta, but on other days she wants to try our meals, which is often met with her seal of approval: "hmmmm nice". These eating habits aren't any different to non-vegan children. I have a friend whose toddler would only eat cheese sandwiches for weeks. So persevere and be adventurous!

Audrey is now 18 months old and starting to talk, so I like to explain why our food choices matter. We have a book "V is for Vegan", to teach her about veganism and compassion. She loves it. You can even get it second hand on the World of Books website.

What aspects of Animal Equality's work inspire you the most?

Two elements:

1. Animal Equality's undercover investigations. We need these so people can see what is happening - the truth needs to be exposed. I am in awe of people who can hold it together enough to selflessly work in these places to record much needed footage. I wouldn't be able to do it. I'd be in tears the whole time, which would be a bit of a give away!
2. The work that Animal Equality is doing to influence corporate organisations and governments. Not everyone is going to go vegan overnight, unfortunately, so we need policies and companies to listen and to make changes from the top too.



WEAR YOUR HOODIE WITH PRIDE

As you may have seen, back in February 2020 we were joined by animal advocate and actor, Joaquin Phoenix, on London's iconic Tower Bridge for a demonstration and banner drop to highlight the link between animal agriculture and the climate emergency.

We dropped a huge 390 square foot banner off the side of the bridge that read 'Factory farming is destroying our planet – Go vegan'. Millions of people saw the news coverage, and Sky News even exclusively interviewed Joaquin on the day!

That evening, at the 73rd BAFTA ceremony, Joaquin Phoenix went on to win the 'Best Actor Award' and we are honoured to have him by our side in the battle to end factory farming.

If you would like to own a hoodie with the same design that Joaquin Phoenix was wearing, we have a limited number in stock which you can order from our eBay shop here: go.animalequality.org.uk/hoodie. They are warm and cosy - perfect for winter!



Winter warmers

Sweet potato and chickpea curry

INGREDIENTS:

Serves 4

35 minutes

400 ml canned coconut milk
200 ml vegan vegetable stock
200 g spinach
1 can (400 g undrained weight) chick-peas
1 large sweet potato, chopped
1 red chilli, sliced (optional)
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
2 cm fresh ginger, peeled and grated
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp coconut oil
2 tsp turmeric
1 tsp cumin

METHOD:

Heat the coconut oil in a large high-sided pan over a medium heat until melted. Fry the garlic, ginger and chilli (if using) for around 3 minutes, taking care not to let the garlic burn. Add the tomato purée, turmeric and cumin, stir to combine and fry for 2 minutes more. Put the sweet potato into the pan and pour over the vegetable stock and coconut milk. Bring to the boil, then turn down the heat slightly and leave to simmer for around 20 minutes, until the sweet potato is tender and the sauce has thickened. Mix in the drained chickpeas and spinach, then cook for a further 5 minutes.

Serve with fluffy rice, fresh coriander and a wedge of lime!



Spiced lentil ragù

INGREDIENTS:

Serves 4

25 minutes

400 g chopped tomatoes
100 g green lentils (uncooked weight)
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 onion, diced
1 carrot, diced
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
2 tsp smoked paprika
½ tsp cinnamon
½ tsp chilli flakes
Vegetable oil for frying
Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cook the lentils according to packet instructions. Meanwhile, put a frying pan on a medium heat and add a glug of vegetable oil, enough to just cover the bottom of the pan in a thin layer. When hot, add the garlic and diced onion and carrot. Fry for 5 minutes, until the onions are translucent. Then add the balsamic vinegar, smoked paprika, cinnamon and chilli flakes. Continue to fry the mixture for a further 5 minutes, before adding the cooked lentils and chopped tomatoes. Turn the heat down to medium-low and leave to simmer for another 5-10 minutes, stirring regularly. Check the seasoning before taking the ragù off the heat, you may want to add salt and pepper.

You can serve this spicy twist on a classic with pasta, a jacket potato or even as the filling of a plant-based cottage pie.

US:

Animal Equality has filed a lawsuit against major pet food purveyor Champion Petfoods for falsely advertising several of its Acana brand products. Acana advertises its fish ingredients with claims such as “caught by fishermen we know and trust” and “from American waters”, yet certain fish species used in their pet food products, such as rainbow trout, are almost always industrially farmed. What’s more, certain Acana products containing rainbow trout were also found to test positive for ethoxyquin, a controversial feed additive commonly found in products that contain farmed fish. Our team in the US is urging the court to declare that these representations are misleading and to prevent similar claims from arising in future.



MEXICO:

In an investigative film entitled ‘Enemy of the Planet’, our team in Mexico released alarming drone footage and denounced the serious environmental risks caused by pig farms in the state of Jalisco. Beside these industrial farms – housing more than 89,000 pigs – we discovered vast ponds polluted by pigs’ urine and faeces. Studies show that as many as 100 different pathogens (such as bacteria which in some cases, can have lethal effects on humans) can be found within 0.3 ounces of pig excrement. Animal Equality filed complaints against these farms for the potential ecological imbalance and environmental damages caused to the region and is requesting permanent closure of these facilities.

BRAZIL:

In a shocking exposé, our team revealed harrowing footage of animal cruelty within industrial farms in Brazil. Pigs were found to be beaten with electrified sticks and forced to live in their own filth – creating a perfect breeding ground for zoonotic diseases that can make the jump from animals to humans. In a short film narrated by Brazilian actress, Ellen Jabour, we told the truth about what is happening behind closed doors and urged consumers to leave pigs off their plate.

SPAIN:

In collaboration with major Spanish online newspaper Público, our team in Spain released an investigation into a factory farm in Spain that recorded the brutal effects of intensive animal farming. Over the years, chickens have been selectively bred to grow as big and as quickly as possible, so companies have more meat to sell and more money to make. This causes terrible issues for the birds who can barely stand due to their enormous size. Many are forced to sit in their own ammonia-laden waste, causing burns on their breasts and feet; some even become too exhausted to reach the water drinkers or feeders. Today, the growth rate of a chicken for meat production is four times higher than it was 70 years ago. If a human baby were to grow at the same rate; at two months old it would weigh about 661 pounds.

INDIA:

As part of their ongoing ‘Thoughtful Thursday’ information campaign, Animal Equality’s team in India have interviewed a number of high-profile celebrities and experts on issues impacting animals across the country and beyond. This important weekly action has sparked conversations with influencers and the public about critical issues affecting animals and humans alike, including live animal markets, caging hens for their eggs, the health benefits of a plant-based diet and more!

GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

With only a few weeks to go until the holiday season, most of us are starting to think about what to serve for lunch. Sadly, for some this inevitably means turkey plus all the trimmings.

An astonishing 10 million turkeys are eaten in the UK during the Christmas period every single year. However, turkeys are incredible beings who, like all farmed animals, suffer immensely during their tragically short lives. Our investigation into an Essex farm in 2018 exposed the realities of intensive turkey farming - sick and injured birds, tightly packed into overcrowded sheds, with the dead left to rot amongst the living - a far cry from the image that ads on TV would have us believe.

Here's some turkey trivia to highlight just how wonderful these animals are:

- 1. The colour of a turkey's head and throat will change depending on his mood.**
- 2. Turkeys form strong social bonds, sometimes travelling in the wild with groups of 200 or more.**
- 3. Turkeys have great hearing, but no external ears.**
- 4. Wild turkeys sleep in trees away from predators - this is natural roosting behaviour that even domesticated turkeys will try to do.**
- 5. A wild turkey's gobble can be heard up to one mile away.**
- 6. Wild turkeys can run at speeds of up to 25 miles per hour and fly as fast as 55 miles per hour.**

Source: One Green Planet

If you're interested in following the antics of a turkey saved from the dinner plate, we suggest getting to know Cornelius, the full-of-character sidekick to Esther the Wonder Pig



Turkey alternatives

There are now more delicious alternatives available than ever before. So, why not give one of these a try this year!

Tofurky Roast

The original, and some say still the best! Widely available at various supermarkets and wholefood stores.



Vegan Christmas Star Tarte

Another pastry dish, but this time in the shape of a festive star! Mushrooms and root vegetables encased in a melt-in-the-mouth puff pastry. Order now at Morrisons.



Wicked Kitchen Wellington

Who doesn't love a wellington? This one wraps pea protein and mushrooms in beautifully flaky pastry. Buy now at Tesco.

Plant Kitchen Vegan Festive Wreath

A new offering from Marks and Spencer's plant-based range. Available in stores and online.



Vegan Turkey Style Joint with Caramelised Onion Stuffing

Made from soya-protein and stuffed with onion and herb stuffing, this is a great alternative to the classic Tofurky, especially if you're on a budget. Now selling at Asda online and in stores.

In each edition of our Their Voice magazine, we'll be shining a light on a specific species and/or issue, exposing the ways in which current practices cause suffering to farmed animals.

Plant Pioneers No Turkey Parcels

Seitan, stuffing and vegan bacon, all combined in one! Available for pre-order at Sainsbury's.

***"Do the best you can
until you know better.
Then when you know
better, do better."***

—
Maya Angelou



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